

# Cultivator

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## Animal Antibiotics Meeting Is Aug. 25

An Aug. 25 workshop in Hanceville, Alabama, will examine the Food and Drug Administration's Guidances for Industry (GFIs) and veterinary feed directive (VFD). The new federal regulations, which take effect December 2016, require a prescription in order to give livestock antibiotics in feed.

"We still have a year-and-a-half to learn about the GFIs and VFD, but they will have a great impact on all animal agriculture, from beef cattle and poultry to pork and catfish," said Nate Jaeger, Alabama Farmers Federation Beef Division director. "This meeting is one of 12 planned across the country to inform farmers about the upcoming changes."

The educational workshop is Tuesday, Aug. 25, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Bailey Center Auditorium at Wallace State Community College, 801 Main St. NW, Hanceville, Alabama.

The event is open to farmers, veterinarians, feed manufacturer representatives and Extension agents from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee. FDA and U.S. Department of Agriculture officials will participate.

Comments from workshops will be reported at a national summit in late fall.

The workshop is free with lunch provided, but registration is required at [FarmFoundation.org](http://FarmFoundation.org).

The Farm Foundation is sponsoring the event, in cooperation with the Alabama Farmers Federation and other agricultural groups.



*Dr. Dwight Wolfe, right, a veterinarian and Auburn University professor, speaks with Commodity Producers Conference attendees during a tour stop at the College of Veterinary Medicine July 31. More than 800 farmers attended the four-day conference in Montgomery.*

## Farmers Enjoy Commodity Conference

The Alabama Farmers Federation hosted its 43rd Commodity Producers Conference in the state's capital city July 31 - Aug. 2.

More than 800 farmers attended the event, which included educational workshops on agricultural issues and tours of central Alabama farms and historical sites.

"I always love coming to the commodity conference," said Charlotte Grimes of Cherokee County, who toured Auburn University. "It's like a little vacation, and farmers don't really get to take vacations."

At the E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter, farmers on one of the tours learned about variable rate irrigation and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

"I can see the importance and value of research they are doing with these new technologies," said Bob Luker, Talladega County row crop farmer. "My farm isn't quite the right fit for some of it, but I think farmers could benefit from hiring a con-

sulting firm that could diagnose problems and field scout with a UAV."

Winners of Young Farmers (YF) contests were announced during the conference. Montgomery County's Garrett and Emily Henry were named the 2015 Outstanding Young Farm Family, and Calhoun County's Abbie Keel won the Excellence in Ag award.

During the women's luncheon, winners of the state sewing, quilting and tablescapes contests were also announced. First-place winners were Ruby Nuss of St. Clair County, table runners; Sarah Oden of Etowah County, youth table runners; Anne Yancey Barrett of DeKalb County, hand-stitched and machine-stitched quilting; Blanche Lee Mitchell of Blount County, baby quilting; and Cheryl Nelson of Crenshaw County, tablescapes.

Read more about the conference in the September issue of *Neighbors* and online at [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org).

## AAES Prepares For Fall Harvest, Events

Guest column from AAES Outlying Units Director Dale Monks

There's an air of excitement and anticipation as Auburn University's campus is stirring again with students and faculty ready for the fall semester.

The same is true for our outlying experiment stations as summer crops wind down, field tours are planned and preparations are made for harvest and planting fall cover crops.

The Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station (AAES) will host the 4th Ag Discovery Day at the E.V. Smith Research Center field crops unit in Shorter Oct. 10. This event is free and open to the public.

Activities are appropriate for all ages and provide a cross-section of AAES work from the past year. Make plans now to attend this fun and educational event that is supported by public, private and producer checkoff funding.

### On The Move In Ag

- **Molly Gregg** is the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) assistant director of 4-H programs.
- **Kyle Kostelecky** is ACES assistant director for family and consumer science programs.
- **Kurt Simon** is Alabama's Natural Resources Conservation Service interim state conservationist.
- **Puneet Srivastava** is Water Resources Center director at Auburn University.

### Meetings Detail State's Ag Strategic Plan

The Alabama Agribusiness Council is hosting meetings across the state to educate farmers about the 2015 strategic plan for agriculture.

Meetings are Sept. 2 at the Houston County Extension Office in Dothan and Oct. 28 at the Morgan Farmers Co-Op in Hartselle. Sessions run from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information and to RSVP, email [lcauthen@alagribusiness.org](mailto:lcauthen@alagribusiness.org).

The strategic plan includes goals that would result in a 10-percent increase in Alabama agriculture's economic impact and employment by 2020.

## New Catfish Research Discussed



Auburn University staff presented the latest research on catfish health during a tour of Randy Hollingsworth's Hale County farm Aug. 5. Foreground, from left, are Hollingsworth, Alabama Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries John McMillan, Perry County farmer Paul Wheeler and Auburn University professor Jesse Chappell.

## Commodity Corner

### Beef

Many beef farmers sold calves early again this year to try and capture record-high prices. However, there is always a premium market for value-added cattle like those that will be sold in upcoming board sales. Check sale results and information on upcoming sales like the Piedmont Feeder Cattle Marketing Association's at [ALFeederCattle.com](http://ALFeederCattle.com).

-Nate Jaeger, division director

### Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod

A free boxwood blight update meeting for garden center workers, landscape contractors and nursery staff is Wednesday, Aug. 19, from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries in Montgomery. The meeting will cover disease symptoms and best practices to prevent its spread. Lunch is provided by the Alabama Nursery & Landscape Association. Online registration is required at [tinyurl.com/Boxwoods15](http://tinyurl.com/Boxwoods15).

-Mac Higginbotham, division director

### Wheat & Feed Grains

In an effort to combat misconception about glyphosate use, the National Wheat Foundation launched a blog using sound scientific facts about wheat and glyphosate. Read the blog entries online at [WheatFoundation.org/blog](http://WheatFoundation.org/blog).

-Carla Hornady, division director

### Pork, Poultry

Since 2010, Alabama farmers saved more than \$2 million in construction permit fees through the Animal Feeding Operations/Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (AFO/CAFO) program. In turn, state farmers invested more than \$550 million to construct 1,398 new poultry houses. Auburn University found the total economic impact of new poultry house construction is \$903.8 million.

-Guy Hall, divisions director

### Peanuts

This year's peanut crop appears in good shape overall. However, there are dry spots and weather damage in some fields. Peanut harvest will begin in early September.

-Caleb Bristow, division director

### Forestry, Wildlife Resources

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service will soon survey 10,000 farmers from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas about feral swine damage on farms. Responses will shape development of federal policy and management programs. Questions cover presence of feral swine, crop or livestock damage and current control methods.

-Rick Oates, divisions director

## Accurate Food Labeling Bill Passes U.S. House

Alabama's seven U.S. representatives voted "yes" July 23 on H.R. 1599, also known as the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act. The measure passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 275-150.

The bill provides a national framework for voluntary labeling of foods that do not contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It would prevent a patchwork of state labeling regulations on foods containing GMOs.

"This common-sense legislation allows for a voluntary program to provide consumers with information on the presence or absence of GMOs in a way that does not unfairly imply one is better than the other," said Mitt Walker, Alabama Farmers Federation National Legislative Programs director. "It gives food manufacturers the option of tapping into certain markets. However, the bill also keeps food affordable for consumers who don't want to pay for a label mandated though fear-mongering activist groups."

The "non-GMO" labeling program included in the bill is modeled after the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program.

The Alabama Farmers Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation support H.R. 1599.



Cullen Wiggins of Dow AgroSciences, right, discusses weed control with farmers during the 2015 Central Alabama Crops Tour at the E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter July 23. The annual event updates farmers on new research that could improve farm production.

## Farmers Learn Weed Control Techniques On Tour

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System's (ACES) Central Alabama Crops Tour July 23 for area farmers focused on weed control research.

Held at the E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter, farmers learned about new sprays, nozzles and improving spray efficiency. ACES has hosted the tour annually since the '70s to help farmers with crop management.

"We listen to what farmers are con-

cerned about," said Christy Hicks, ACES regional agronomic crops agent. "We have more weed problems now than in years past, so we focused more on weed control technologies this year."

Lee County Farmers Federation President Mahlon Richburg said he learned things he can take back to his farm.

"I paid attention to the chemicals they used and how effective they were at the different growth stages," he said.

## Touch-A-Tractor Event A Big Hit With Kids



Children gave the Lee County Young Farmers rave reviews on the group's Touch-A-Tractor Day July 18 in Opelika. Kids climbed into the cab of a John Deere tractor and raced toy tractors. The event also included a food drive and safety demonstrations.

## Upcoming Events

- **Aug. 21** - Field Crops Tour at Wiregrass Research and Extension Center in Headland.
- **Aug. 22** - Alabama Farmers Federation scholarship recipients luncheon at Ham Wilson Arena in Auburn.
- **Aug. 25** - Farm Foundation workshop at Wallace State Community College in Hanceville. For more information and registration, visit [FarmFoundation.org](http://FarmFoundation.org).
- **Sept. 3** - State Heritage Cooking Contest at Alabama Farmers Federation home office in Montgomery.
- **Oct. 3** - Auburn University Ag Roundup and Taste of Alabama Agriculture at Ag Heritage Park in Auburn.

## Bloggers Tour Miller Farms



Blount County farmer Lance Miller, right, talks peanuts with bloggers Paula Claunch, left, and Lynda Self. Five bloggers from the Huntsville area toured Miller Farms in Snead July 20 to learn about agriculture. Monsanto sponsored the event, which included field tours and bloggers learning to pick corn.



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## AFBF's Stallman Will Leave Office In January

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Bob Stallman announced he will not seek re-election in January 2016, following 16 years at the helm of the nation's largest, most influential general farm organization.

Stallman, a cattle and rice producer from Columbus, Texas, is AFBF's 11th president.

Following the announcement, the Alabama Farmers Federation board of directors voted to endorse Zippy Duvall as Stallman's replacement.

Federation President Jimmy Parnell announced the endorsement before Duvall addressed farmers at the Commodity Producers Conference closing banquet Aug. 1 in Montgomery.

"He shares the values of our members and understands the challenges facing Southern farmers," Parnell said. "I am confident he can take the nation's largest farm organization into the future."

President of Georgia Farm Bureau, Duvall is a poultry, cattle and hay farmer from Greshamville, Georgia.

## Walker County's Free Tomato Sandwich Day



The Walker County Farmers Federation gave away tomato sandwiches, prepared with local tomatoes, July 25 at the Walker County Farmers Market in Jasper. From left are Tommy Johnson, Charlotte Elkins, Walker County Sheriff Jim Underwood, Wilene Sherer, county President Dorman Grace, Shirley Johnson, Peggy Pugh, Maxine Dotson and Linda Underwood.